

**REDUCED-FAT FLAVORED COATING
AND METHODS OF USING SAME**

ABSTRACT

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A reduced-fat flavored coating including a sufficient amount of flavoring agent, *e.g.*, cocoa, to provide a selected flavor, a matrix of sugar crystals and sugar glass dispersed through the flavoring agent in an amount effective to provide the coating with sufficient structural integrity to prevent flowability at temperatures less than about 40°C, and a plurality of microspheres including a dry hydrocolloid component that are dispersed through the flavoring agent and sugar matrix to provide a slippery mouthfeel that mimics fat and begins to disperse when in contact with saliva so as to mimic the melting of cocoa butter during consumption of chocolate, wherein the flavored coating is at least substantially anhydrous and has less than about 10 weight percent fat, and wherein the fat present exists as dispersed micro-droplets. Methods of using same, *e.g.*, to enrobe confectionery products or other food products, as well as the resultant food products, as also included.